
ILLUSTRATING FUNGI 8

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PEN AND INK WITH WATERCOLOUR

In the last issue I illustrated the same fungi in four different ways, and one of these was drawn in ink instead of pencil. In this final article I intend to elaborate on this technique. If you do not feel confident with your drawing, it might be wise to draw your subject in pencil first, and then to go over the lines with ink when you are sure they are correct. More-or-less any pen can be used, but it is important to use a good quality waterproof ink, so that it will not smudge when you come to apply wet paint. The pen I used for the illustration with this article was a **Staedtler technical drawing pen** fitted with a 0.35mm nib, and the ink was a **Rotring drawing ink** in sepia colour. This colour is ideal for drawings of fungi, because although pen lines are hard, they do not appear so harsh as they would if black ink was used. Some people prefer to use an ordinary dip pen, because they like to vary the thickness of the line. It is all a matter of personal preference.

With pen and ink work it is possible to put in all the shading at the drawing stage. There are various ways of doing this; one is to use the cross-hatching technique, where the heaviness of the shadow is controlled by the proximity of the lines. The closer they are together, the greater the illusion of deep shadow. This can be seen on the caps of *Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca*. Another way is to use stippling. Working from light to dark, start with a few spaced out dots, and as the shadow needs to become heavier, increase the stippling until the tonal range looks suitably graded. An example of this can be seen in the mature cap of *Clitocybe odora*. Sometimes the use of short vertical lines as a means of shading can be effective, as can be seen on the stipes of *C. odora*.

All these methods of producing shading are rather time consuming, but you make up for this at the painting stage. Generally all you need to do is to put on a single layer of the appropriate colour and the picture is finished. This is why the technique is generally known as line and wash. Texture as well as tone can often be conveyed very effectively with ink. The sponginess of the non-gill fungi such as in *Boletus* can be shown to perfection using the stippling technique. The scales on the caps of *Amanita* can be accurately portrayed by stippling the whole of the cap area whilst leaving the paper white to show the scales.

With pen and ink work it is particularly important to use the right type of paper. Cartridge paper is no use as it will not take watercolour without buckling. The 'NOT' surface papers sold for watercolour use are all too rough, making it nearly impossible to draw a continuous pen line without wobbling. The best papers are the **Hot Press watercolour papers**, although if you are a perfectionist, you will not like the tendency in some of them, for the ink to 'bleed' into the paper very slightly. So for the perfectionist I would recommend **Bristol Board**. This has an immaculate smooth, hard surface which is perfect for pen and ink, but its drawback is that it is not quite so easy to obtain a smooth flow of paint. However, with practice this can be achieved.

In fact, when it comes to illustrating fungi, practice is what it is all about, and I hope this series of articles has given you an insight into the different ways there are of painting and drawing, and that you will enjoy practising your art for many years to come.



Psathyrella hydrophila



Lepiota felina



Hypholoma fasciculare



Clitocybe odora



Mycena epipterygia



Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca

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